



FASHION INTERNATIONAL

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION WORLD

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FURS, FEATHERS & FRILLS

Fall 2004

Furs, feathers and frills: these three words sum up the key fall trends. Designer looks ran from demure to glamorous, and there was a strong emphasis on decades past. Interesting too was the fact that many, if not all designers, showed clothes that could best be described as seasonless. Lightweight

fabrics, sheer layers, and spring-like color schemes prevailed. Even the furs could best be described as item-driven pieces rather than cold weather staples. Shrugs, boleros and capelets were ubiquitous throughout the collections, while feathers added lightness to the many tweed ensembles

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MEN'S FALL 2004

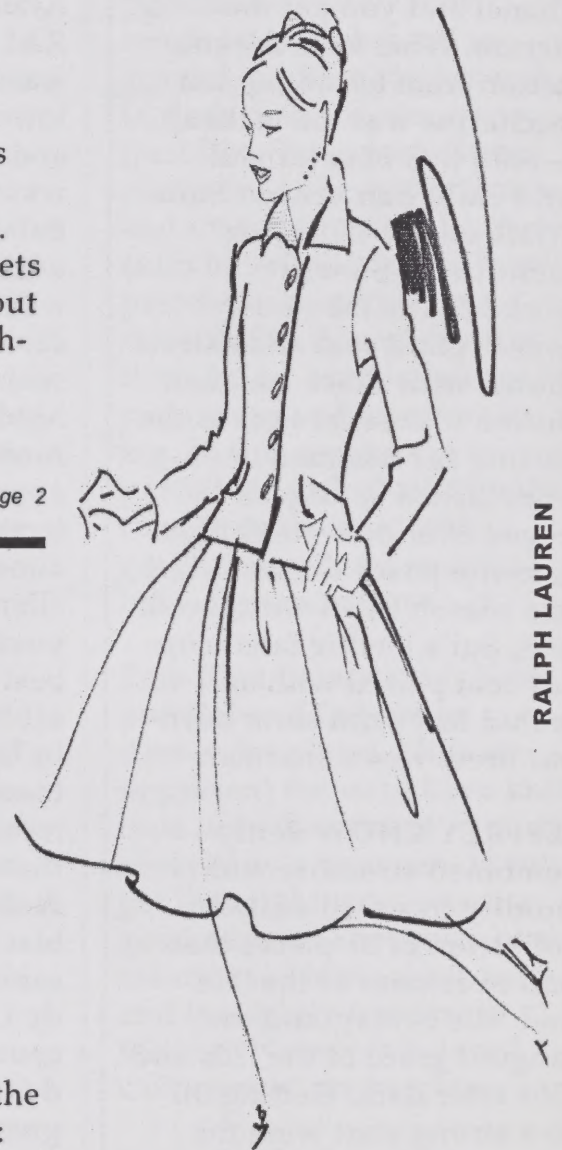
From Cigar Bar to the Great Outdoors

From adventurer to businessman, this season's looks will certainly please both men and women. After all, the perfect compliment to any woman is a well-dressed man.

Nautica

Designer David Chu presented very functional, color-rich sportswear for the rugged adventurous male: wind and water-resistant jackets, great cable knit

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RALPH LAUREN

shown. Ruffles, flounces and frills also upped the ladylike quotient.

Our pick of the fall '04 season's best and brightest.

ANNA SUI showed one of her strongest collections to-date by delivering a lineup of saleable, ladylike feminine clothes put together in her own inventive way. Think Slim Aarons meets Chanel and you get the picture. What kept the collection from becoming too saccharine was the makeup — bold hits of color and wild child hair echoed Sui's "Walk on the Wild Side" soundtrack. So what worked? The fabulous tweed/plaid coat and skirt shown with a lace trimmed chiffon blouse, as well as the darling fur trimmed or embellished cardigans tossed over delicate chiffon or matte jersey dresses. And, in a season filled with lavish furs, Sui's terrific faux leopard coat paired with an orchid leaf print satin burn-out dress was a charmer.

JEFFREY CHOW deftly combined structure with fluidity in a well-edited collection of 31 pieces that had overtones of the '50s and '60s by day, and the languid grace of the '20s and '30s after dark. Getting off to a strong start were the proper, high-waist peplum coats in duchesse satin or wool (a recurring silhou-

ette), and the pretty scallop ruffled silk dresses in delicious pale shades. Chow shows flair for traditional bespoke tailoring in a great take on the English school-boy. His version combines a white ribbon-trimmed gray flannel Eton jacket and skinny pants with a yellow cashmere crew and white satin tie-neck tank. After dark, these same pants are paired with an iridescent silk dropped waist tank and fox capelet.

Attending a **CHADO RALPH RUCCI** collection was a bit like entering hallowed ground. The hushed and reverent atmosphere was reminiscent of Cristobal Balenciaga and the heyday of couture. Rucci's ladies will surely covet his impeccable tailoring, intricate seaming and unexpected hidden luxe touches that the rarefied couture client best appreciates. While the collection as a whole was aimed at a certain worldly clientele, there was a more youthful slant to some of his best designs: the honey sable poncho — the ultimate in ladylike sophistication — tossed over nutmeg suede jeans. Another look with that same élan, a brown cashmere sweater under a black silk gros de Londres / sable parka over black gros de Londres jeans. Rucci's couture technique was evident in a magnificent pieced green alligator jacket with subtle seam detailing; and a guinea hen feather jewel neck jacket shown over a white mousseline blouse

and trousers in a Prince of Wales check. Almost monastic in their purity was Rucci's show-stopping sweeping infanta ball gown in taupe melange cashmere/silk/faille, and his brown moiré coat and pant with pearl embroidered shell.

RALPH LAUREN's woman goes her own way. For fall, glamour is redefined and touched with Lauren's signature artisanal, turquoise and jet jewelry. Pure and simple — it's all about updated classic pieces like a camel's-hair skirt in a new fuller shape, or the shorter boucle tweed jacket that curves snugly around the body. A beaded silk georgette dress toned down with a camel melange cashmere sweater, as did a beaded charmeuse skirt with a black cashmere sweater. Simple, spare, seductive: Lauren dazzled us with a group of black (money in the bank) pieces. Outstanding — his skinny silk/wool coat over stretch twill pants and a fabulous, slinky bugle beaded charmeuse dress.

It was evident that Michael Vollbracht was channeling the spirit of **BILL BLASS** in his second collection for the house. Sure to be a hit with his ladies were luncheon looks that elevated the classics to luxurious heights: golden sable trimmed skirt suits in mocha and oatmeal and a stylish quilted jacket in moss. This was shown with embroidered chiffon pants and taffeta halter.

CONVERSATIONS – PART II

Spring 2005 Trends

In this issue, we focus on color — the big story for spring and summer 2005. To get an idea of what is in store, we visited the European Preview (a teaser held in NYC that previews Premiere Vision in Paris) and color analyst Alexandra Kelly of Huepoint Inc., a color trends company.

At European Preview, spring's theme was "Vitamin 05". In terms of color, attendees were urged to "savor the piquancy of brights coming up against the tartness of fresh tones, using white to lend rhythm to the whole." Additional trends to look for —

Chiffon and lace borders are diaphanous.

Vital color tones are set off by contrasts with white.

Details are all-important.

Embroideries are precise and checks are meticulously executed.

Structures are often micro and in square designs, such as honeycombs, piques, and basket weaves.

Fabric has fluidity to it, even wool and cotton

Huepoint – Spring '05

Alexandra Kelley, one of the industry's foremost color analysts, treated us to a rare peek into the mysterious process of color prediction and analysis. She has been working in the field for over ten years and has seen many trends come and go, to return yet again. For Huepoint, the spring trend forecast began with defining the base colors (also called track colors) that are included in one of their major groups known as "In Neutral Colorways".

In Neutral Colorways/ Base Colors

"It all starts with the base colors," Alexandra explains. The base of the season is usually a neutral base that serves as the underpinning to the other more vibrant color groupings. This season, the base colors are called "In Neutral Colorways". Each of the four spring color groupings, including "In Neutral Colorways," is presented in boxes. Each individual color within these four groupings

is represented by a bobbin of mercerized yarn stored in a glass test tube for optimal viewing. The colors represented by "In Neutral Colorways" are soft and pearlized in tone. They range from pink pearl (a grayish pink) to sleek peach (a flesh nude) to rice paper (just like the paper). Green continues to be important and there is a neutral called skim blue (pale teal). These pastels work with a true crisp white. Alexandra sees them being used in lounge/yoga wear and career suiting. In this group, she is partial to track chalk (a pale camel) and mirror (soft gray). Overall, these colors have a greenish cast.

Pure Bliss Colorways & Newport Relaxed Colorways

Alexandra states, "It is so important for us to have knit tops. It is the core of everybody's business. If you get that right, you've got a good season. The "pure bliss colorways" is ideal for knits and is slightly tropical in feeling." Newport Relaxed Colorways" are brights.

Tradewinds Colorways Alexandra describes this

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More youthful were Blass' spice-toned corduroy and wool crepe jackets, shown atop tonal sweaters and re-colored plaid kilts. When the occasion calls for all-out glamour, the answer is a gorgeous, ivory double-faced wool crepe evening sheath with cutout diamond bodice and ostrich feather stole.

Romance was in the air at **TOCCA** with feminine looks tempered by the bold colors of the psychedelic '60s movement. There was an abundance of floral motifs that recalled the heyday of Biba and swinging London. They were hand-applied, embroidered, printed, beaded or stitched. As always, Tocca's coats were some of the best, especially a fabulous baby corduroy number or the white wool reefer with charming pinked edges and appliqued flowers. Tocca's pink A-line trench with mushroom color striped, grommet detailed tie belt was a knockout. Also noteworthy, pretty body skimming dresses and pinked-edge separates, as well as a floral chiffon ruffled blouse and a V-neck day-to-dinner dress detailed with appliqué at the hem.

Charming and soignée could best describe **J. MENDEL's** debut RTW collection. Designed with the young



JEFFREY CHOW

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sweaters, waterproof nylon tech pants and, a favorite, the oh-so comfy looking quilted nylon pants. Even his suits had a handsome sporty feel; many paired with turtleneck sweaters for a more casual look.

Perry Ellis

This was Patrick Robinson's second collection for the Perry Ellis label and it was another success — every piece a winner. In this walk through presentation, men were handsomely dressed in eclectic "preppiness". The lines were clean and included knits, vests, suits and some denim. The standouts — a red suit with a silver tie, black tuxedo pants with a crimson vertical leg stripe, a double-breasted herringbone coat with a large collar, and a sleeveless vest over a dress shirt and tie.

Harmon

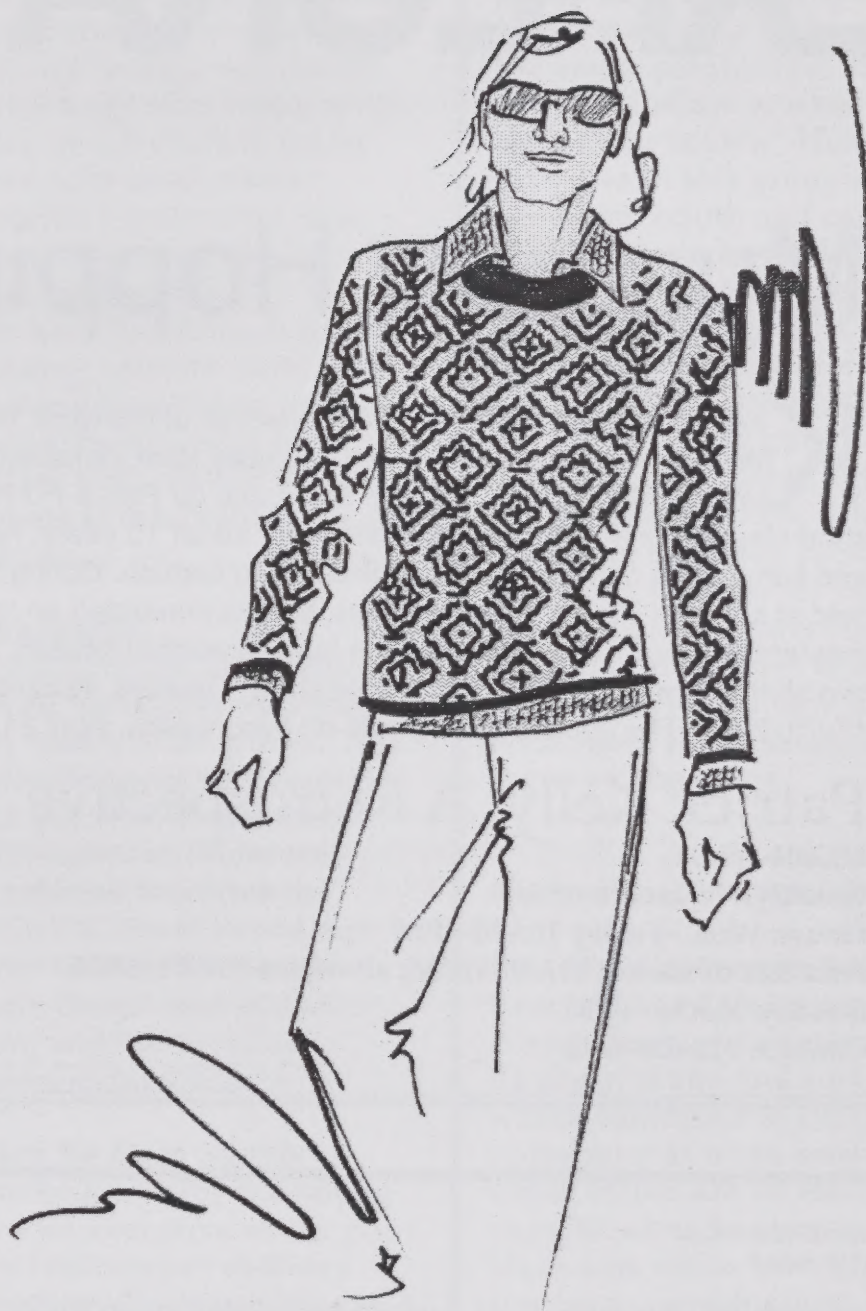
A recent winner of the Ecco Domani Award, much recognition has been bestowed upon Mr. Andrew Harmon's menswear designs. From ascots and smoking jackets, to large black square-framed glasses and high-waist pants, the look at Harmon is very YSL sophisticated, clean cut, and a bit Michael York-ish. Fun accents abound, with accessories like the black and white polka dot bow tie worn with a tuxedo and a very handsome coral paisley tie worn with a blue suit. This

well-tailored collection also included his new women's line.

Kenneth Cole

This season's show asked the question, "Are you putting us on?" In response, FI assuredly says that men will be "putting on" many pieces from this collection.

The primary colors used were brown, chocolate, graphite and navy. There were some very wearable coats and suits. One really memorable winter whiteout look was a cream ribbed turtleneck over white flat-front pants, topped off with



MAURICE MALONE

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EXPLORATIONS

Museum Hopping

Kee an eye out for the first retrospective of the work from designer Patrick Kelly. Mr. Kelly, an African-American originally from Vicksburg, Mississippi, was the first American member of the Chambre Syndicale du Prêt-à-Porter. Although Kelly had a relatively short life, and only produced collections for about 15 years, he was well known for his flamboyant and sometimes controversial contributions to fashion. During his lifetime, his clothes not only sold at some of New York's top stores, they commanded an impressive celebrity client list. Today, they are still available at some of the leading auction houses. Doyle New York will be including two shirts signed by Kelly in their next show "Couture, Textiles and Accessories", previewing April 17-20, 2004. The auction will be held on Wednesday, April 21, at 10AM.

Patrick Kelly: A Retrospective

4/17/04-9/5/04

Brooklyn Museum of Art

Hours: Wed. -Friday 10AM-5PM

First Sat. of month 11AM-11PM; all others 11AM- 6PM.

Sunday, 11AM -6PM

Contact: 718-638-5000

"FURS, FEATHERS & FRILLS"
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socialite in mind, the fur-driven collection evoked the subtlety of Cartier rather than a jeweler known for Hollywood style "Bling." The color palette leaned towards soft tones with the occasional hit of black and brown. Broadtail in Mendel's deft hands became the fur of choice for the young social set particularly

when translated in an ivory capelet or 3/4 coat. The former was shown over a cashmere turtleneck and lamé flare skirt with stitched satin piping. Mendel added sable tail short sleeves to a brown crocodile jacket and paired it with a bias striped crinkle chiffon skirt. The collection really shone after dark with an outstanding

sheared mink coat piped in satin, worn atop a pale pink chiffon on tulle point d'esprit cocktail dress; and an ultra feminine, black crepe-back satin gown with silk ribbon detailing.

a white moleskin safari jacket, and accessorized with a cream scarf, white brass buckled belt, gold aviator glasses and brown crocodile boots.

Maurice Malone

The look was a bit '30s and '40s gangster, but with a young modern twist and a bit more color. The suits were sharp with lavender lining. One two-button single-breasted wool suit with a blue shadow box button-down shirt highlighted by a silk mustard iridescent tie really caught the eye. For a more casual look, the black and white diamond pattern cashmere sweater with denim pants really stood out (a bit '80s).

John Varvatos and DKNY

Both John Varvatos and DKNY convey simple urban feels in their very wearable men's collections. For Varvatos the inspiration came from the streets of Soho. The look was multi-layered and rustic with a clean luxurious urban feel. The outerwear seemed often the focus. Two standouts were the espresso washed wool twill coat with a fur collar and, for a different look, the antique looking fitted military shearling coat in espresso. The colors like moss and bark used in the DKNY collection, say fall in the park. There were many good looking pieces, including the oak wool duffel coat, bark tweed sweater, and the bark

waxed nubuck leather pant.

Cloak

Cloak has a large following and definitely a unique feel. This collection was downtown edgy with some really nice trench coats worn by men with memorable swirled hairdos and pom-poms accenting their shoes. But, back to the clothes...there was a great looking oxblood wool/cashmere cardigan, and a futuristic dinner jacket and blazer with unique accent panels at the shoulders and elbows.

Chereskin

Ron Chereskin is an experienced menswear designer. He knows what works. This collection was no exception, but this time it included womenswear. Some really handsome favorites included a cream tweed zip-front sweater with mushroom tweed coat and slim jean, and the bark/olive/cream striped blazer.

Marc by Marc Jacob

The look was for the young — a bit evocative of the poor boy/newspaper delivery boy from the early decades of the 1900's and, at the same time, a bit like character Ducky from *Pretty in Pink*. Key pieces, which supported the look, were the fingerless mittens, a gray/brown striped hat and corduroy bag, brown tweed pants and vest.

group as "vintage tropical — like Jamaica in the days of the sugar plantations. There is a lot of white worked-in with these colors." Her favorites in this group are called barkcloth and capers. "I think these two colors will make it to pants, wovens and bottom weights. If knit tops are important then stripes are important. That's what we try and put together in our boards. I think the little tiny flower prints are going to be *big*, pretty, romantic. J. Crew, for instance, will do a tiny cute print. I don't expect to see Lord & Taylor's floors filled with small floral dresses, but there will be some."

Huepoint - Summer '05

Xtra Wet Colorways & Beach Nomad Colorways
Alexandra is very enthusiastic about scuba and surf, which continues to enjoy popularity at mass market. Clean colors are an influence, think of Mondrian — black and white with color similar to combinations in the '60s. "We're coming off of color being blended, a whole family of, for example, blues or reds and rose. We're going into color combinations that present more of a juxtaposition of colors, like pink and green," says Alexandra. "The Xtra Wet Colorways is our hom-

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age to scuba — you could do black and white and a color in Lycra. You'd want to get it stretchy and really body-conscious."

A season or two ago, major fashion designers, namely Anna Sui and Marc Jacobs, drew inspiration from this theme. As spring '05 approaches, FI has been noticing more and more of the scuba and stripe look in the retail market at large. Retail continues its love affair with stripes in vivid, contrasting colors or a color paired with black, as seen in Alexandra's "Xtra Wet Colorways" grouping for summer '05.

Currently at retail, H&M's floor is filled with bright colors that concur with Huepoint's summer '05 forecast and fall under Alexandra's group "Xtra Wet colorways". They are strong colors very similar to Huepoint's white (a pure clean white), radiant heat (sunshine yellow), blue streak (a gorgeous deep blue) scuba green (an almost-emerald green) and dive suit (black). This theme has also caught-on in the entertainment industry in TV shows such as *The O.C.*, "about the rich and self-important community of Newport Beach" (*Vogue* March 2004, p. 390, "People are Talking About"). In this referenced article, there's a picture of the *O.C.* cast clad in the latest fashions and sporting a deliberately careless

surfer look—from their clothing to their hair—and low-key makeup.

The second colorways group for summer '05 is "Beach Nomad". Here Alexandra states, "We love a range of purple wave, blue point, cloud break, and banana yellow. We like to work it with white to up the contrast."

A Final Q & A with Alexandra

Q: "How do you choose the colors each season? From where do you draw inspiration?"

A: "We work off past successes. We have to get it (the color stories) together in groupings. We analyze what our clients said to us last season and the season before. Over the 20 years we've been in business, we've found that when the colors we're playing with make sense to us as a group, and we can visualize it as clothing, then we're on to something. If you can't see it as a group of clothing, you're in living in lala land."

"There are customers who will take it out of the box we present and use it literally. It's probable that they have some color they love from somewhere else and it morphs with what we show them. That's where we can turn around and get inspired. The climate at retail is also extremely important. If things are going well at retail it affects everything. If not, it makes people very tenuous."

Q: "Is Europe still influential?"

A: "We used to go to PV, but it started to look all the same. It seems to work in a cycle; it's just too European, and too staid. This is what happens to cities. Americans are not traveling as much; there's SARS, terrorism, and the economy. The work is being sent to Eastern Europe and India."

Q: "Why do we wear black?"

A: "Black is budgetary and frankly it goes with everything. Your other choice is typically hideous color combinations you wouldn't want to wear."

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